MINNESOTA
STUDENT SURVEY

Minnesota Student Survey Tip Sheet: Read Aloud Assistance During Administration

The Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) is the primary source of comprehensive data on young people at the state, county, and local level in Minnesota, and is the only consistent source of statewide data on their health and well-being. It provides valuable information regarding issues vital to the health, safety, and academic success of young people. The survey is voluntary, confidential, and anonymous on the part of students.

This survey does not include a text-to-audio feature in the 2025 administration due to online platform limitations. Some students may need (or their individualized education program (IEP) may require) read aloud assistance to take the survey. Although reading the survey questions aloud to students is not a recommended practice to administer the MSS, as it can jeopardize students' anonymity and comfortability to respond, we recognize the need for accessibility. Therefore, we recommend providing read aloud assistance only when the confidentiality and anonymity of students' responses, and ability to respond, can be secured. The MSS is first and foremost student-centered; we empower students to share their experiences by doing our utmost to protect their anonymity. Tips for administering the survey with read-aloud assistance are listed below.

Tips for administering the survey with read-aloud assistance

Students may ask for read aloud assistance or their IEP may require assistance to be provided by the school while students take the survey. To provide read-aloud assistance, school personnel (e.g., educational assistants, faculty/staff) may need to sit close to students. This situation has the potential to expose students' responses to the school staff member, or others in the room, and thereby compromising the survey. However, schools can take precautions to address this risk through:

- **Making sure to arrange separate, private spaces for student(s) who need read aloud assistance to complete the survey. This provides more security for the student(s) and ensures that other students are not distracted by the read aloud assistance.**
- **If you already know that students would not feel comfortable with you reading off their screen, make sure you print out a copy of the survey – keeping it out of the view of the student.**
- **Clearly detail how the read aloud process will go.**
- **Remind students that the survey is anonymous and confidential and that no one will know their responses.**
- **Remind students that your help is voluntary and that they can ask you to stop at any time, or to continue and help again at any time.**
- **Instruct students to first listen to you reading the question and then wait a little bit after you read the question before they select a response.**

- **Read the question and then turn away or move to the side with ample time so that you do not see or hear the student's response.**
- **Confirm with the student that they have selected their response and have moved onto the next question before starting onto the next question.**
- **If the student is not comfortable with you sitting close to them and reading the question, read the questions from the paper copy from a distance after confirming the specific question or part that they need assistance.**

Help with survey administration

If you have questions or need help, please contact:

- Minnesota Department of Education: mde.studentsurvey@state.mn.us
- Book office hours with an MDE staff to get help: Virtual office hours
- Find survey administration instructions, parent notification letters, tip sheets, and more: MSS 2025